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Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-14 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
H-02 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 SP-02
SS-15 USIA-15 ACDA-12 DOE-11 SOE-02 NRC-07 EB-08
AGRE-00 COME-00 TRSE-00 AF-10 /146 W
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R 081204Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 045
INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
AMEMBASSY KABUL
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

UNCLAS SECTION 1 OF SECTION 2 NEW DELHI 3705

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PGOV, AF, IN
SUBJECT: PRESIDENT DAOUD VISITS INDIA

1. SUMMARY. AFGHAN PRESIDENT DAOUD LEFT NEW DELHI FOR ISLAMABAD MARCH 5 AFTER A CORDIAL, 3-DAY STATE VISIT. HIS BUSY SCHEDULE INCLUDED A WELL-RECEIVED SPEECH TO PARLIAMENT AND SEVERAL MEETINGS WITH PRIME MINISTER DESAI, PRESIDENT REDDY AND OTHER INDIAN LEADERS. THE JOINT COMMUNIQUE, WHICH SEEMED TO BORROW HEAVILY FROM THE ONE ISSUED AT THE END OF DAOUD'S 1975 VISIT TO INDIA, EXPRESSED THE "COMPLETE SATISFACTION" OF BOTH SIDES WITH THE PROGRESS OF INDO-AFGHAN RELATIONS. END SUMMARY.

2. SOON AFTER HIS ARRIVAL ON MARCH 3, PRESIDENT DAOUD ADDRESSED INDIA'S PARLIAMENT WHOSE MEMBERS, ACCORDING TO PRESS REPORTS, "CHEERED LUSTILY" AS HE ENTERED THE HALL. DAOUD'S SPEECH:
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-- WELCOMED INDIA'S EFFORTS TOWARD "NORMALIZATION" OF RELATIONS AMONG SUBCONTINENTAL STATES;

-- CHARACTERIZED AS "PRODUCTIVE"THE ROLE OF THE NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT IN PROMOTING UNDERSTANDING AMONG NATIONS;

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-- EXPRESSED HIS HOPE THAT THE NON-ALIGNED COORDINATING BUREAU WOULD, AT ITS MEETING IN KABUL IN MAY, TRY TO DEVELOP A UNIFIED NON-ALIGNED POSITION ON COMPLETE DISARMAMENT FOR PRESENTATION AT THE UN SPECIAL SESSION ON DISARMAMENT; AND

-- OBSERVED, ON ONE HAND, THE GRAVE DANGER OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS PROLIFERATION AND, ON THE OTHER, THE BENEFITS OF PEACEFUL USE OF NUCLEAR ENERGY. (THIS POINT, UNLIKE THE OTHERS, WAS NOT MENTIONED IN THE JOINT COMMUNIQUE.)

3. LATER THE SAME DAY, AT A BANQUET IN DAOUD'S HONOR, BOTH PRESIDENTS REDDY AND DAOUD NOTED THAT INDO-AFGHAN POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC COOPERATION WAS ROOTED IN THE CLOSE HISTORICAL TIES BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES. REDDY STRESSED THE CONTINUITY OF INDIAN FOREIGN POLICY AND THE GOI INTEREST IN IMPROVING RELATIONS WITH INDIA'S IMMEDIATE NEIGHBORS; INDIA WOULD ALSO LIKE TO DEVOTE SPECIAL ATTENTION TO STRENGTHENING FRIENDSHIP AND PROMOTING ECONOMIC AND TECHNICAL COOPERATION WITH DEVELOPING COUNTRIES. INDIA "WILL ALWAYS BE WITH YOU IN YOUR STRUGGLE TO DEVELOP YOUR COUNTRY AT A FAST PACE," HE PROMISED DAOUD.

4. THE FOLLOWING DAY, ACCORDING TO PRESS REPORTS, UNCLASSIFIED

DAOUD AND PRIME MINISTER DESAI DISCUSSED THE POSSIBILITY OF INDIA ASSISTING AFGHANISTAN TO:

-- INCREASE THERMAL POWER GENERATING CAPACITY;

-- SET UP ANOTHER INDUSTRIAL ESTATE SIMILAR TO THE ONE OUTSIDE KABUL;

-- ESTABLISH A MACHINE TOOLS INDUSTRY; AND

-- DRILL DEEP TUBEWELLS FOR IRRIGATION IN SOUTHWEST AFGHANISTAN.

DESAI IS ALSO REPORTED TO HAVE ASSURED DAOUD THAT INDIA HAD NO INTENTION OF SUCCUMBING TO THE TEMPTATION TO PLAY THE ROLE OF REGIONAL LEADER.

5. ALSO ON MARCH 4, THE TWO COUNTRIES SIGNED AN AGREEMENT WHEREBY INDIA WILL PROVIDE AFGHANISTAN WITH A 2-YEAR, INTEREST-FREE LOAN OF 100,000 TONS OF WHEAT. LATER THAT DAY, AT A PRESS CONFERENCE, DAOUD SAID THAT THE OVERLAND TRANSIT OF GOODS WAS ONE OF THE "GREATEST

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PROBLEMS" FACING HIS LAND-LOCKED COUNTRY. HE THANKED
IRAN AND THE USSR FOR HELPING AFGHANISTAN TO SOLVE
THIS PROBLEM. SAYING THAT HE INTENDED TO RAISE WITH
PAKISTANI LEADERS THE QUESTION OF TRANSIT FACILITIES
THROUGH PAKISTAN FOR INDO-AFGHAN TRADE, DAOUD
COMMENTED THATPAKISTAN PREFERRED TO SHIP INDIA'S
WHEAT LOAN OVER A BRIEF PERIOD WHILE AFGHANISTAN, WITH
INADEQUATE RAILHEAD FACILITIES, FAVORED STAGGERED
SHIPMENTS. HE THOUGHT THAT INDIA, PAKISTAN AND
AFGHANISTAN COULD RESOLVE AMONG THEMSELVES ANY TRADE
TRANSIT PROBLEMS.

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6. DAOUD THOUGHT THAT THE DIALOGUE BEGUN WITH
PAKISTANI PRIME MINISTER BHUTTO ON THE PAKHTOON ISSUE
HAD CREATED A "BETTER ATMOSPHERE" BETWEEN PAKISTAN
AND AFGHANISTAN. WHILE WARNING AGAINST "PREMATURE"
SPECULATION CONCERNING THE OUTCOME OF HIS TALKS WITH
CMLA ZIA, HE NEVERTHELESS HOPED TO MAINTAIN THE
CLIMATE OF THEIR EARLIER DISCUSSIONS SO THAT THEY
MIGHT ACHIEVE "BETTER RESULTS."

7. ASKED ABOUT THE SHAH OF IRAN'S CONCEPT OF AN
ASIAN COMMON MARKET, DAOUD ADMITTED THAT HE HAD "HEARD
SOMETHING ABOUT IT" AND, ON ASKING THE INDIAN GOVERNMENT
WHAT IT KNEW OF THE SHAH'S PROPOSAL, HAD LEARNED THAT
THE IDEA WAS NOT YET MATURE ENOUGH TO ASSUME THE SHAPE

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OF A CONCRETE PROPOSAL. HE REMARKED THAT ANY IDEA
WHICH WOULD EXTEND COOPERATION AMONG ALL THE COUNTRIES
OF ASIA WOULD BE GOOD.

8. THE JOINT COMMUNIQUE ISSUED DURING DAOUD'S VISIT
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TOUCHED ON THE POINTS MENTIONED IN PARAGRAPH 2 AND
REITERATED STANDARD NON-ALIGNED POSITIONS ON THE
INDIAN OCEAN, THE NEW INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC ORDER
AND SOUTHERN AFRICA. IN ADDITION, IT:

-- EXPRESSED HOPE FOR THE SUCCESS OF THE GENEVA
MIDDLE EAST PEACE CONFERENCE AND CONDEMNED ISRAELI
SETTLEMENTS IN OCCUPIED TERRITORY;

-- EXPRESSED CONFERN THAT THE CONFLICT IN THE HORN
OF AFRICA WOULD INCREASE GREAT POWER RIVALRY IN THE
REGION AND URGED THAT THE PROBLEM BE SOLVED POLITICALLY
WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE OAU;

-- RECOGNIZED THE SPECIAL NEEDS OF LAND-LOCKED COUNTRIES;
AND

-- EXPRESSED THE "FERVENT HOPE" THAT THE UN SPECIAL
SESSION ON DISARMAMENT WOULD PRODUCE A "TIME-BOUND
PROGRAM" FOR NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT.

9. WE PLAN TO DISCUSS THE DAOUD VISIT WITH MEA AND
AFGHAN EMBASSY OFFICIALS LATER THIS WEEK.
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